

# Violence Against Women



## Missouri State Prevention Plan Strategies for Action

Revised Draft  
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## **Violence Against Women Missouri State Prevention Plan Strategies for Action**

### **Purpose of the Violence Against Women Prevention Plan**

Violence against women is a form of terrorism that occurs each day in Missouri and around the world. Violence against women poses a daily threat to life and traumatizes millions of women, girls and families every year. Just as Homeland Security seeks to assure all citizens are prepared, vigilant, and informed, those concerned about the prevention of violence against women should also be prepared, vigilant, and informed.

Violence against women affects women across all economic, educational, cultural, racial, and religious lines. Violence against women can take many forms, from intimidation and control to stalking, battering, rape, and even murder. Indeed, nearly one third of the women in this country who are murdered are killed by a former or current intimate partner. As the leading cause of injury for American women between the ages of 15 and 54 years, violence is an ominous public health problem in this country.

Typically violence against women is considered a women's issue, however women do not necessarily control the resources or the decisions on a community level to lead to prevention. Violence against women is most certainly a men's issue because men commit the majority of violence against women; men are also victims of sexual assault; men know and are survivors of violence against women; and men can STOP violence against women. This state plan proposes to engage men in an area where they are traditionally not involved as resources but heavily involved as part of the problem, and to work in allegiance with women and girls to end violence against women.

For decades champions have been working to provide services and support to victims of violence against women by treating injuries, providing safe shelter, offering counseling, and assisting women to regain self-sufficiency. This planning effort values and honors those efforts and recognizes these services will be critical in the lives of women and children for decades to come. Realizing that the present availability of support services for victims will never meet the growing need for services, this plan seeks to focus on preventing violence from happening in order to reduce the future need for services.

### **Violence Against Women Defined**

Violence against women takes several forms, including domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual assault and abuse, rape, incest, dating violence, and elder abuse. Violence is categorized as: physical violence, sexual violence, threats of sexual or physical violence, and psychological/emotional abuse,

including coercive tactics. The following definitions are from *Intimate Partner Surveillance: Uniform Definitions and Recommended Data Elements*, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999.

- ❑ Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, disability, injury, or harm.
- ❑ Sexual violence is the use of physical force to compel a person to engage in a sexual act against his or her will, whether or not the act is completed.
- ❑ Threats of violence include the use of words, gestures, or weapons to communicate the intent to cause death, disability, injury, or physical harm.
- ❑ Psychological/emotional abuse is trauma to the victim caused by acts, threats of acts, or coercive tactics such as humiliation, controlling what the victim can and cannot do, and disregarding what the victim wants.

### **The Prevalence Of Violence Against Women In The United States**

- ❑ An estimated 1.9 million women are physically assaulted each year. (*Violence Against Women Monograph, The National Women's Health Information Center, The Office of Women's Health, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.*)
- ❑ One out of four American women report having been raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, live-in partner, or date at some time in their life. (*Violence Against Women Monograph, The National Women's Health Information Center, The Office of Women's Health, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.*)
- ❑ Women are significantly more likely than men to be injured during an assault. About one in three women who are injured during a rape or physical assault require medical care. (*National Violence Against Women Survey, National Institute of Justice and National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998*)
- ❑ Women are significantly more likely than men to be murdered during an assault. In 1998, there were 1,830 murders attributable to intimate partners, and in the same year, nearly three out of every four victims of murder attributable to intimate partners were women. (*Intimate Partner Violence, Special Report, May 2000, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U. S. Department of Justice*)
- ❑ There is a relationship between victimization as a minor and victimization later in life: women who were physically assaulted as a child or raped before age 18 were twice as likely to report being physically assaulted or

raped as an adult. *(National Violence Against Women Survey, National Institute of Justice and National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998)*

- ❑ Many American women are raped at an early age. More than half of rape victims were younger than age 18 when they experienced their first attempted or completed rape; 21.6 percent were younger than age 12; and 32.4 percent were between the ages of 12 and 17. *(National Violence Against Women Survey, National Institute of Justice and National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998)*

### **The Prevalence Of Violence Against Women In Missouri**

- ❑ In 2000, 88 women were murdered, and 50 of those deaths were attributed to domestic violence. *(Missouri Crime and Arrest Digest 2000 and Missouri Crime Summary 2000, Missouri Department of Public Safety)*
- ❑ In 2000, there were 37,898 domestic violence cases reported to law enforcement in Missouri. *(Missouri Crime Summary 2000, Missouri Department of Public Safety)*
- ❑ In 2000, 9,396 women in Missouri sought emergency room treatment or inpatient care as a result of being physically assaulted or raped. *(Patient Abstract System, Center for Health Information Management and Evaluation, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services)*
- ❑ Of women ages 18 and older surveyed in 1999, 30 percent experienced an attempted or completed rape at least once in their life. This is higher than the national estimate of 18 percent from the 1999 National Violence Against Women Survey. *(Sexual Assault Surveillance Study, Sexual Assault Prevention Program, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, 2000)*
- ❑ One out of six (17 percent) adult women age 18 or older who reported having experienced an attempted rape or rape were victimized by a current or ex-spouse or live-in partner. Another 18 percent of women reported a current or ex-boyfriend as the perpetrator. *(Sexual Assault Surveillance Study, Sexual Assault Prevention Program, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, 2000)*
- ❑ In 2001, 10 percent of female high school students in Missouri reported having been forced to have sexual intercourse and over 16 percent of twelfth graders reported forced sexual intercourse. *(2001 Missouri Youth Risk Factor Survey, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)*

- ❑ In 2001, almost nine percent of female high school students in Missouri reported being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend during the past twelve months. Twelve percent of twelfth graders reported being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend during the past twelve months. *(2001 Missouri Youth Risk Factor Survey, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)*

## Defining Prevention

One desired outcome of the state plan to prevent violence against women is to create an environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Traditionally in public health, prevention activities occur on three levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary.

- ❑ Primary prevention refers to activities designed to reduce risk factors and keep something from happening or stop something before it occurs. In terms of violence against women, primary prevention efforts would reduce or minimize the risk of exposure to violence through such means as universal screening for risk and providing support and respite for families under stress.
- ❑ Secondary prevention activities interrupt what is currently happening so no further harm is done. Secondary prevention of violence against women may include activities to identify and intervene as early as possible through screening by health care providers, making safety and self-sufficiency plans, and referral to victims' advocacy and support services.
- ❑ Tertiary prevention aims to reduce or eliminate temporary or permanent disability after something has occurred. Tertiary prevention of violence against women could include prosecution of the perpetrator, and medical and rehabilitative services.

In addition, this plan recognizes the optimal level of prevention to strive for to prevent violence against women is primordial prevention, or creating an environment that eliminates the risk of violence. The plan contains objectives and strategies aimed at changing how society views relationships and violence. Activities such as teaching young children in child care settings how to respect others, as well as social norms campaigns are examples of primordial prevention.

Violence against women has been perpetrated for centuries and is rooted in how males and females are taught to be men and women in relationships with each other and in society. While this plan focuses on primary prevention, all levels of prevention will need to occur simultaneously in order to make progress. This planning effort recognizes it will take generations to eradicate violence against women.

## Defining Violence Prevention Competencies

Many of the strategies in the *Violence Against Women: Missouri State Prevention Plan, Strategies for Action*, address the need for the development of violence prevention competencies as a way to prevent violence against women. The following definitions will help the reader understand the meaning of the term violence prevention competencies.

Competency	Definition
Ability to communicate effectively.	Effective use of basic social skills (e.g., starting a conversation), effective communication in various social relationships, and the ability to communicate in clear and direct ways.
Ability to develop positive social relationships.	Social problem solving and decision-making ability, constructive and creative resolution of conflict, understanding and use of group processes (including peer mediation and conflict resolution), empathy, and the capacity for intimacy.
Ability to effectively regulate personal behavior.	Self control and self-monitoring of one's behavior and how it impacts others, predicting the consequences of personal acts, particularly those involving aggression, staying calm in order to think before acting, to reduce stress and sadness, to replace aggression with positive behavior, and to control anger, affective, behavioral, and cognitive self regulation.
Ability to develop a positive self-identity.	Accurate identification and understanding of the social cues/rules present in one's social environment, perception of self-efficacy, awareness, understanding, and recognition of emotions of oneself and others, social perspective-taking, effective coping, positive self concept, future goals, and hopefulness.
Ability to positively influence society.	A belief in the capacity to influence one's social environment, cooperate with others, selecting positive role models and supportive mentors, nurturing peer relationships and peer negotiation, attitudes, norms, values, and moral engagement.
Ability to respect others.	Respect for individual differences, recognize and appreciate diversity, sincere interest in the well being of others shown through socially responsible behavior.

## Guiding Principles

Guiding principles were established for this planning effort to aid and facilitate implementation of the plan. The guiding principles seek to assure the state plan developed is feasible, acceptable to a variety of stakeholders, politically supported, and economically sound. The attached plan focuses on five areas of emphasis: collecting and using data, resource development, coalition building, media/public information, and policy development.

In an effort to assure the plan developed could achieve buy-in and broad-based acceptance, the Department of Health and Senior Services sought to include representatives of other state agencies, the faith community, local public health, higher education, elementary and secondary education, the military, professional organizations such as the Missouri Medical Association, health care organizations, advocacy organizations such as Missouri Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence, as well as representatives of community-based organizations for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and elder abuse. The advisory group that assisted in developing the state plan to prevent violence against women provided a diverse voice representing a broad spectrum of issues and diversity of opinion and perspective.

The accompanying plan, *Violence Against Women: Missouri State Prevention Plan, Strategies for Action*, is the result of a year of meetings with the advisory group and smaller sub-groups, a year of research, writing, heated discussion, and re-writing. The plan also reflects changes made based on comments from the public through a series of town hall meetings.

In January 2004, the Department of Health and Senior Services in collaboration with the advisory group and many community agencies conducted public meetings across the state to obtain comments and recommendations from additional citizens concerned about ending violence against women. Town Hall Meetings were conducted in New Madrid, Cape Girardeau, Poplar Bluff, Versailles, Columbia, Kirksville, Springfield, Joplin, Kansas City, St. Joseph, St. Louis County, St. Louis City, West Plains, and a special meeting was conducted with students at the University of Missouri-Columbia. These meetings proved to be an incredible opportunity to not only share the work of the planning team but also to hear about the experience and expertise that communities have accumulated.

## **Dedication**

This plan is dedicated to our mothers and fathers who taught us that it was not nice to hurt others. This plan is also dedicated to the people who attended the town hall meetings around the state and shared their wisdom and experiences.

## Collecting and Using Data

### Vision

Adequate data exist to describe the extent of violence against women in Missouri and for developing policy and programs and supporting requests for funding.

### Mission

Agreement on the standard collection and reporting of data about the incidence and prevalence of violence against women in Missouri, including consistent uses of definitions, terminology, and methodology.

#### **Objective 1:**

Data about violence against women will be collected and analyzed to aid in the development of policies and prevention activities and to inform the community.

### Strategies

1. Develop a uniform system for collecting data from many sources to track the incidence and prevalence of violence against women.
2. Identify an entity to be responsible for managing the violence against women data system and ensure resources are available to accomplish the work.
3. Analyze data, report results about violence against women, and promote use of data in planning and evaluation of policies and prevention activities.
4. Develop an evaluation plan to assess the effectiveness of prevention interventions currently in place.
5. Develop a research agenda for studying the primary prevention of violence against women.



## Resource Development

### Vision

Adequate resources are available to create and sustain efforts to prevent violence against women.

### Mission

Existing resources catalogued and needed resources identified for preventing violence against women.

#### **Objective 2:**

Resources will be available to create and sustain activities to prevent violence against women.

#### **Strategies**

1. Enhance the ability of communities and constituencies to advocate for additional resources to prevent violence against women.
2. Educate policy makers and funders about the need for financial support to ensure the prevention of violence against women.
3. Encourage development of policies that promote economic self-sufficiency for women as well as men.
4. Identify non-traditional funding opportunities to prevent violence against women, support survivors, and intervene with perpetrators.
5. Develop and disseminate information about resources for preventing violence against women.
6. Coordinate and streamline state processes for administering funding to prevent violence against women.

#### **Objective 3:**

Elementary and secondary schools will have the resources to conduct effective violence prevention activities.

#### **Strategies**

1. Promote funding for all elementary and secondary schools to provide teachers and other school staff with materials, training, and other support to help children build healthy relationships.

2. Promote funding for all schools to assure that certified counselors are available on a one counselor to 500 students ratio.
3. Maintain a listing of resources to support individual school efforts to integrate violence prevention in the school curricula and all other school activities.

#### **Objective 4:**

Women will have the resources to remove themselves and their children from violent environments and to live independently and safely.

#### **Strategies**

1. Mandate adult and juvenile courts to make findings about the absence or presence of interpersonal violence in cases involving children.
2. Mandate adult and juvenile courts to make specific findings about the appropriateness of ordering spousal and/or child support in cases involving violence against women or children.
3. Mandate adult and juvenile courts and the Division of Child Support Enforcement to expedite collection of child and/or spousal support in cases involving violence against women or children.
4. Mandate the provision of government-funded services and resources for housing, financial support, health care and related issues be made top priority in adult and juvenile court cases involving violence against women and children.
5. Promote the provision of privately-funded services and resources for housing, financial support, health care and related issues be made a top priority in adult and juvenile court cases involving violence against women and children.
6. Support legislation that changes the current method of computing spousal and child support payments to use of the Self Sufficiency Standard for Missouri.

## Coalition Building

### Vision

Traditional and non-traditional partners work collaboratively to prevent violence against women.

### Mission

Opportunities for collaboration among diverse violence against women prevention partners identified and/or created.

### Objective 5:

Community partnerships and collaboratives will address and prevent violence against women.

### Strategies

1. Identify and engage community and religious leaders to create and encourage coalitions to promote the prevention of violence against women.
2. Build relationships among health professionals, schools, law enforcement, corrections, victim services, criminal justice, social services, employers, local coalitions, community groups, and faith-based organizations to make preventing violence against women a priority and to promote coordination and shared action.
3. Establish new coalitions specifically to engage in the prevention of violence against women.
4. Work with coalitions, community groups, and faith-based organizations to conduct training sessions for human resource departments about incorporating violence prevention, including issues related to violence against women, in workplace policies and employee handbooks.
5. Encourage communities to assure full participation of all agencies conducting secondary and primary violence prevention to work together to prevent violence against women.

### **Objective 6:**

Community coalitions will fully involve males in their activities to prevent violence against women.

### **Strategies**

1. Promote violence against women prevention models that involve males as positive role models and providers of education and services, and target males as recipients.
2. Work with coalitions, community groups, and faith-based organizations to empower men to stop the violence other men perpetrate by responding to incidents of violence before, while and after they happen, and to empower men to model healthy relationships and peaceful conflict resolution.

## Public Information

### Vision

Public images respect and promote non-violent behavior and positive relationships.

### Mission

A plan to address violence against women in the media and other forms of public information.

### Objective 7:

Community norms will discourage violence against women and will promote treating all people with dignity and respect.

### Strategies

1. Work with media outlets and other sources of public information to develop and disseminate consistent messages about preventing violence against women.
2. Conduct community education campaigns that:
  - a. Inform the public about the prevalence of violence against women;
  - b. Influence the development of healthy and safe relationships;
  - c. Challenge the myths and misconceptions regarding violence against women;
  - d. Build awareness of available community resources; and
  - e. Engage males in holding other males accountable for preventing violence against women;
  - f. Deliver consistent messages with relevance to variable cultural needs within communities.

**Objective 8:**

All people will be aware of the scope and severity of violence against women.

**Strategies**

1. Work with coalitions, community groups, and faith-based organizations to counteract violence against women in movies, music, television, magazines, and advertisements, and to promote the concept that violence against women is not acceptable.
2. Identify and engage community and religious leaders to promote the inclusion of violence against women prevention in all community activities.

## Policy Development

### Vision

Comprehensive laws, rules and administrative procedures fully support the prevention of violence against women.

### Mission

Key policymakers and administrators are in agreement on goals and strategies to prevent violence against women.

### Objective 9:

All child-rearing education programs will include strategies and information about raising children in a non-violent environment.

### Strategies

1. Use proven methods for teaching parents and other caregivers how to model non-violent behavior and how to teach children violence prevention competencies.
2. Provide child-rearing education for all parents and other caregivers in a variety of settings, including the workplace, places of worship, and health care settings.
3. Promote support for home visiting programs, parental information lines and respite services as methods to reduce stress and prevent violence and provide support for parents to respond appropriately to the development of children, including sexual development.
4. Engage health and mental health professionals to encourage parents and other caregivers to attend child-rearing education programs and make referrals to child-rearing education programs and support groups.
5. Engage religious leaders to encourage parents and other caregivers to attend child-rearing education programs and make referrals to child-rearing education programs and support groups.
6. Mandate core skills and competencies, including violence prevention competencies, and violence prevention for court-ordered and other mandated parenting classes.

### **Objective 10:**

All regulated child care workers will be trained in violence prevention competencies, including those preventing violence against women.

### **Strategies**

1. Mandate the certification of all child care workers; include as a requirement for certification that workers demonstrate violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.
2. Mandate continuing education requirements for child care workers that specify a certain number of hours of study of violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.
3. Promote a salary structure for child care workers that encourages certification and continuing education.
4. Promote a level of government funding for child care that supports the salaries of child care workers and education needed to ensure safe and violence-free child care environments for children.
5. Encourage child care providers to include information about preventing violence against women in family education programs.
6. Mandate the Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network to offer training to non-regulated child care providers about violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.

### **Objective 11:**

All providers of foster care and other out-of-home placements for children will be trained in violence prevention competencies, including those for preventing violence against women.

### **Strategies**

1. Mandate the certification of all foster care providers and workers in out-of-home placement facilities for children; include a certification requirement for workers to demonstrate violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.



2. For foster care providers and workers in out-of-home placement facilities for children, mandate continuing education requirements that specify a certain number of hours of study of violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.
3. Promote a salary structure for workers in out-of-home placement facilities for children that encourages certification and continuing education.
4. Promote a level of government funding for foster care and other out-of-home placement facilities for children that will support the salary structure and education needed to ensure a violence-free environments for children.
5. Encourage out-of-home placement facilities for children to include education about preventing violence against women in family education programs.

### **Objective 12:**

All regulated care providers for adult populations will be trained in violence prevention competencies, including those preventing violence against women.

### **Strategies**

1. Mandate the certification of all regulated care providers for adult populations; include a requirement for certification that workers demonstrate violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.
2. For regulated care providers for all adult populations, mandate continuing education requirements that specify a certain number of hours of study of violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.
3. Promote a salary structure for regulated care providers for all adult populations that encourages certification and continuing education.
4. Promote a level of government funding for regulated care providers for all adult populations that will support the provider salaries and education needed to ensure a violence-free environment.
5. Encourage regulated care providers for all adult populations to include education about preventing violence against women in family education programs.

### **Objective 13:**

Violence among children, adolescents, and young adults in educational settings will be reduced.

### **Strategies**

1. Mandate as a condition of employment that all school personnel, including administrators and volunteers, demonstrate violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.
2. Strengthen accreditation standards for schools to promote effective integration of violence prevention in all school curricula and all other school related activities.
3. Support accreditation standards for staff development for school personnel about
  - the symptoms of abuse and violence, and the impact of violence on the school community;
  - the legal implications for handling violence in the school community; and
  - strategies to contain and de-escalate inappropriate social behaviors in the school community.
4. Encourage periodic reviews of school district policies and practices to confirm that violence prevention methods are effective and reflect the most recent research.
5. Provide age-appropriate education for all students about violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.
6. Promote Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) testing of social studies and health to better assess the effectiveness of violence prevention education.
7. Promote for all students in higher education institutions a set number of instructional credit hours for all students that focus on violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.
8. Support legislation that would prohibit corporal punishment in educational institutions and all child care facilities.

**Objective 14:**

Helping professionals will receive training in violence prevention including the prevention of violence against women.

**Strategies**

1. Encourage health, mental health, and social service professional organizations to mandate a certain number of hours of study of violence prevention competencies, including those for the prevention of violence against women.

**Objective 15:**

Juvenile sex offenders and other juvenile perpetrators of violence against women will be identified at the earliest possible stage and receive appropriate interventions.

**Strategies**

1. Mandate the juvenile justice system to provide appropriate interventions at the earliest possible stage for juvenile sex and violent offenders.
2. Promote the development and/or replication of effective juvenile sex offender and violent offender intervention models in appropriate agencies and institutions.

**Objective 16:**

Adult perpetrators of violence against women will be identified at the earliest possible stage and receive appropriate interventions.

**Strategies**

1. Mandate the development and implementation of effective intervention models for adult perpetrators of violence against women.
2. Promote programs that provide offenders with a range of evidence-based interventions to decrease their likelihood of engaging in further violence against women.

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Primary funding for this project was provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, through the Violence Against Women Planning Grant and Implementation Program. While violence affects all citizens, this project focuses on violence against women and girls. Most of the strategies proposed in this plan will be effective for preventing violence against all persons regardless of gender.

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